

# Discover Montana's Delicious Treasures



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## Activity 3 – Discover Montana Treasures

1. Montana is the Treasure State due to the abundance of precious metals and minerals found in our state. Our beautiful state has many more treasures to offer including a bounty of healthy agricultural products! In this lesson, students will discover the delicious treasures grown in Montana.
2. Even though Montana has a short growing season, we are able to raise and grow lots of delicious and nutritious foods in our state. Montana is a leading producer of certified organic wheat, dry peas, lentils and flax, and honey. Other crops grown in Montana include sweet cherries, sugar beets, seed potatoes, and hay (food for animals!). We also have more cows than people in Montana and raise a number of other animals including hogs, sheep, and chickens. Some of our food is not farmed, and is wild including elk, deer, antelope, bison, fish, and many wild plants.
  - Have students brainstorm what foods are grown in Montana. Make a list on a whiteboard or a large piece of paper of foods that are or are not grown or raised in Montana. If students have trouble naming foods, have them think about the last time they were in a garden in Montana. What was growing in that garden? Collect at least two responses as the number of students.
  - For each product listed, have students determine which food group/section it belongs to. Attach the Food Group Mini Posters to a wall or whiteboard, allowing space for students to move in between the signs. Write the Montana foods on slips of paper or on sticky notes. If using whiteboard, display the list of foods the students created and have markers under each food group. Distribute the papers with Montana foods to students and have them attach the strips of paper under the appropriate food group/section (or write underneath using dry erase markers if using whiteboard). This could be made into a relay or group activity to incorporate more physical activity into the lesson. Compare these responses to the lists provided on the poster and Montana Seasonal Food Chart. Please note: growing season and agricultural production vary greatly from one end of our large state to the other. Also, these lists are not intended to be all-encompassing.
  - Ask students to share their favorite Montana grown and/or made food. What food group/section does it belong in? When does it grow (or is raised) in Montana? This discussion could be linked to gardening activities at home or at school, if applicable.
  - To close the lesson, invite the food service manager/head cook into the classroom to discuss steps they have taken to purchase Montana foods. Have the students write down questions they would like to ask the manager/cook about farmers/vendors, list of items they purchase, food safety, and benefits or challenges to purchasing or offering Montana foods for school meals.
3. Have the students try a new Montana food in the classroom that they possibly haven't had the opportunity to taste yet. Utilize the Taste Testing Handout for creative ways of managing taste testing and encourage positive student input. Items to consider having the students try could be kale (kale chips have been a favorite at many schools in Montana), dried bean or peas, lentils, hummus made from lentils, or beans, or squash.